1: Roth--17-18 (No date) 1890 Tasmanians
116, 264, 516

"Ross in describing an aboriginal meal which he witnessed, says, 'These aborigines, I found, were quite...classical in [18] adopting the Roman method of reclining at meals, lying round their fire, resting on one elbow and holding the half-roasted leg of an opossum, eating, in the other.'"

1: Roth--49 (No date) 1890 Tasmanians
116, 177, 264

"While in the settlement they showed themselves apt pupils. Backhouse relates (p. 93): 'The four aborigines took tea with us in the cabin; they were very cheerful, and used cups and saucers with dexterity. A large number of the native women took tea with us; they conducted themselves in a very orderly manner, and after washing up the tea-things, put them in their places, and showed other indications of advancement in civilization. Another party of aborigines breakfasted with us. We distributed among them some cotton handkerchiefs, and some tobacco. Some of the women immediately commenced hemming the handkerchiefs, having learned this art from the wife of the Catechist' (Backhouse, p. 170)."

"Their method of eating is thus described by La Billardière: 'About noon we saw them [forty-eight savages] prepare their repast. Hitherto we had had but a faint idea of the pains the women take to prepare the food requisite for the subsistence of their families. They quitted the water only to bring their husbands the fruits of their labour, and frequently returned almost directly to their diving, till they had procured a sufficient meal for their families. At other times, they stayed a little while to warm themselves, with their faces towards the fire on which their fish was roasting, and other little fires burning behind them, that they might be warmed on all sides at once. It seemed as if they were [102] unwilling to lose a moment's time, for while they were warming themselves, they were employed in roasting fish; some of which they laid on the coals with the utmost caution: though they took little care of the lobsters, which they threw anywhere into the fire, and when they were ready, they divided the claws among the men and children, reserving the body for themselves, which they sometimes ate before returning to the water. Their husbands remained constantly near the fire, feasting on the best bits, and eating broiled Fucus, or fern roots. Occasionally, they took the trouble to break boughs of trees into short pieces, to feed the fire. Their meal had continued a long time and we were much surprised that not one of them had yet drank; but this they deferred till

they were fully satisfied with eating. The women and girls then went to fetch water with vessels of sea-weed [Fucus palmatus], getting it at the first place they came to, and setting it down by the men, who drank it without ceremony, although it was very muddy and stagnant. They then finished their repast' (II. ch. x. pp. 57-60)."

"Ross, describing a visit paid him by sixty aborigines, says: 'They made a small cooking fire on an eminence behind my cottage, and squatting round it by turns, while others walked about and hunted here and there, they continued cooking and eating, more or less, from nine o'clock in the morning to about four in the afternoon, when they all of a sudden ... rushed into the broadest and deepest part of the river in front of my cottage, and splashed and gambolled about for at least an hour.' On another occasion his old visitors, the blacks, reappeared. 'They encamped on the same spot they had formerly done. About an hour before sunset, the hunters having returned home, some with one opossum, others with two or three kangaroo-rats or bandicoots.... They had begun cooking, and had nearly finished dinner, for these aborigines I found were quite fashionable as to their dinner hour, as well as classical in adopting the Roman method of reclining at meals, lying round their fire, resting on one elbow, and holding the half-roasted leg of an opossum eating in the other. They evidently knew the advantage of not overdoing their roast meat, but, by the process they adopted, retained all the best of the gravy. The flames of the fire having burned down, the animals, with all their natural coats upon them, were thrown on the live embers, occasionally turned from side to side, till not only all the fur was singed off, but the entire carcass tolerably well done throughout. It was then taken off, cut up with a sharp flint or [103] stone, or, if their intercourse with Europeans had enabled them to procure that march of civilization--a piece of glass--quartered and

disjointed. Occasionally they would dip the savoury flesh into the alkali ashes of the fire, instead of salt, before putting it to their mouth. As I stood with my little child watching with much interest this aboriginal scene, their natural politeness was constantly urging me to partake with them, and, not to disoblige them, both I and my child each took a nicely-cooked leg of a kangaroo-rat in our hands. Not liking, however, to eat it down, with my best expressions of gratitude I moved gradually away till I reached my house, when I gave the pieces to Danger and Juno [the dogs]' (Ross, pp. 146 and 153-154). In this account it will be noticed that the natives made use of a substitute for salt, an article which is not referred to by any other writer."

1: Roth--104 (No date) 1890 Tasmanians
116, 252, 264, 354

"'The hearths of clay which Anderson noticed at Adventure Bay, at the foot of trees hollowed out thus [by fire], are not, I believe, the work of the natives; for the trees which we saw rooted up and thrown down, had dragged along with them layers [couches] of clay mixed with stone, so hardened by the fire that one could easily have been deceived and taken them for masonry. The natives, indeed, use these hearths to broil their shell-fish; fragments of shells have been found among the ashes at the foot of these trees' (Rossel, I. ch. iv. p. 63). With reference to the hearths La Billardière states (I. ch. v. pp. 175-176): 'Most of the large trees near the edges of the sea have been hollowed near their roots by means of fire.... They seem to be places of shelter for the natives whilst they eat their meals. We found in some of them the remains of the shell fish on which they feed, and frequently the cinders of the fires at which they had dressed their victuals.... Anderson speaks of hearths of clay made by the natives in these hollow trees...; but... the natives of this country do not make their fires upon hearths, but kindle them upon the bare ground, and prepare their victuals over the coals.' Backhouse says (p. 79): 'They daily removed to a fresh place, to avoid the offal and filth that accumulated about the little fires which they kindled daily.'"